

BOOK REVIEW

A wildlife guide to Chile by Sharon Chester, 2008

Princeton University Press. 392 pp. Paperbound. \$19.95. ISBN: 9780691129761 (Also available hardbound and as an e-book.)

Until the publication of this book there was no concise single-volume guide to the remarkable and highly endemic fauna and flora of Chile—not in English, nor in Spanish either, for that matter. Several excellent guides to specific groups are available, of which the best—available in both languages—is Jaramillo's *Birds of Chile* (2003). For Lepidoptera, the only modern resource has been Peña and Ugarte's *Mariposas de Chile* (1996, not 1992 as misdated in this book!), which has bilingual text—but it was printed in a very limited edition, as is usual for Latin American books, and is very hard to get. (Try it on-line! I found one copy available.)

So for visitors interested in butterflies and moths, *A Wildlife Guide to Chile* is the only game in town. And it's not bad. We used to think the Chilean butterfly fauna was really depauperate (except for grass-feeding Satyridae). But then Dubi Benyamini, Zsolt Bálint and Kurt Johnson discovered a wealth of unrecognized Lycaenids, sparking a major reevaluation of evolutionary biogeographical concepts. Fortunately, their work made it into the Peña and Ugarte book—by a whisker. The treatment of butterflies here is explicitly derivative from Peña and Ugarte, but even so, some errors crept in—some via Peña and Ugarte and others *de novo*—and of course, not all the species can be covered, let alone illustrated, in a general book of this sort. So you are encouraged to buy and use Chester, but you might want to make a few corrections in the margins, to wit:

p.92. Not all skipper larvae are green! *Urbanus proteus* does not normally lay eggs in clusters of about 20 (usually singly or at most in twos or threes) and is not restricted to Leguminous vines.

p.94. The descriptions of *Pyrgus* species are wholly

inadequate to tell them apart. *P. notatus*, for example, is not “olive-brown with white spots,” and even if it were, that wouldn't help identify it. *Erynnis funeralis* may not actually feed on alfalfa, and alfalfa is not a grass, as the text implies it is! (“Larvae feed on alfalfa and other grasses.”)

p.95. *Colias vauthierii* does not feed on alfalfa; the name “*Colias de la alfalfa*” is a misnomer, properly applied to *C. lesbia*, which is sexually dimorphic in pattern but, contrary to the text, has both gray-white and orange females, and is not found in Magallanes. *Colias flaveola*, restricted to a few high-elevation canyons in Coquimbo and across the Argentine border in San Juan, is not a “common species.”

p.96. Quintral (*Tristerix*) is a parasite, not an epiphyte. *Hypsochila wagenknechti* (correct spelling) is a high-altitude species, not “common in foothill areas from Coquimbo to Santiago.” It's *Infraphulia*, not *Intra-*, and *Phulia nymphula*, not *nymphula*. The descriptions, again, are completely useless, all the more so because they don't even say these Whites are tiny. And there are other high-altitude mini-whites similar to them that are not mentioned at all.

p.98. Users should be aware that much of the Lycaenid diversity of Chile (understandably) cannot be covered here, and brief descriptions are not of much use. (The illustrations in Peña and Ugarte aren't that much better—one needs to access the photos in the original papers describing them, and they are extremely hard to find.)

p.99. It's “Monarca,” not “Monarcha.” It is by no means established that “South American Monarchs do not migrate.” At least Argentine ones almost certainly do. The evolutionary-biogeographic scenario spelled out here is, frankly, gratuitous arm-waving.

p.100-102. The treatment of the Satyrs is pretty good, but again, many species are (necessarily) omitted. Descriptions (e.g. of *Auca coctei*) are of minimal use. The association of many species with bunchgrass in steppe needs to be emphasized.

p.102. The capsule descriptions of the three species of *Yramea* are not useful. *Vanessa carye* is the sister-species of *V. annabella*, not of *V. cardui*! The description of *V. terpsichore* as “paler” than *V. carye* is bizarre and misleading.

Received: 29 June 2011

There is a brief overview of moths (pp.103-105) with good illustrations of the few big, showy ones. We do not know that all moths “produce potent pheromones,” though many do.

In short: as usual, use with caution. But this book is a good investment for any traveler to Chile with an interest in natural history, and if you are not bilingual, it's a must.

LITERATURE CITED

- JARAMILLO, A. 2003. *Birds of Chile*. Princeton University Press. 288 pp.
PEÑA, G., L. E. & A. J. UGARTE P. 1996. *Las Mariposas de Chile/The Butterflies of Chile*. Editorial Universitaria, Santiago. 359 pp.

ARTHUR M. SHAPIRO, Center for Population Biology, University of California, Davis, Davis, CA 95616.
amshapiro@ucdavis.edu